



City of Takoma Park

## City Manager Comments

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### Report of February 3, 2021

#### February is Black History Month

As we celebrate Black History Month during this pandemic, it is a good time to celebrate African American Public Health Heroes. Here are 17 heroes to celebrate: *W.E.B. DuBois, Adah Belle Samuels Thoms, Ionia Rollin Whipper, Roscoe Conkling Brown Sr., Numa Pompilius Garfield Adams, May Edward Chinn, Virginia Margaret Alexander, Charles R. Drew, Mary Beatrice Davidson Kenner, Henrietta Lacks, Joycelyn Elders, Patricia Bath, Faye Wattleton, Nancy Boyd-Franklin, Deborah Prothrow-Stith, Mae Jemison, and Sherman A. James.* For more information about each, go to: <https://publichealth.nyu.edu/events-news/news/2020/02/27/17-african-american-public-health-heroes-you-need-know>

#### Thank you, Public Works!

Our street and sidewalk snow clearing staff did an awesome job during this week's winter storm. You can always tell that Takoma Park is different and better during a storm! Thank you, staff!

#### COVID-19 Related Information

We continue to advocate for more, and more fairly-distributed, COVID-19 vaccinations. Go to the [Montgomery County Vaccine Information](#) page to learn more and to pre-register if you are in a category that can do so. You can also call 240-777-2982 to pre-register with the County. There are more ways to sign up for vaccines through the [Maryland Vaccine Website](#). The categories eligible for vaccines on the State site often differ by site, and registration availability changes day to day. As the federal roll-out of vaccines gets underway, there may be additional portals to use to sign up for a vaccination.

The City of Takoma Park will do our best to get accurate information out. The best options are to check in frequently with the [Montgomery County Vaccine Information](#) website page and the [Maryland Vaccine Website](#).

While the beginning availability of vaccines provides hope, the more contagious variants of the coronavirus are now in the United States and some have been detected in Montgomery County. **More than ever, it is important to wear a well-fitting mask.** Many people are now double-masking for extra protection. That may be a good idea – and I've started doing that - but masks only work if they cover your nose and chin and fit snugly on the sides. Maintain social distancing and minimize your presence in groups. Be vigilant all of the time!

### **COVID-19 testing in Takoma Park**

Even though all of the attention is on vaccinations right now, it is still important to have regular COVID-19 testing. Free, no appointment COVID-19 testing is being held most Wednesdays and Saturdays at the Takoma Park Recreation Center, 7315 New Hampshire Avenue from 10 am to 5 pm. For this and other testing options, please see the information here: [Montgomery County Testing Sites](#)

### **Update on COVID-19 Response**

A detailed presentation was provided to the City Council at its Priorities Retreat on January 16. The presentation has been posted on the website: [COVID-19 Response Presentation 01162021](#)

Each week, the City's COVID-19 Dashboard is updated. The most recent one is here: [COVID 19 Dashboard](#)

County CARES Reimbursement Received! We are glad to report that Montgomery County's reimbursement to the City of Takoma Park for COVID-19 relief expenditures was received yesterday. The amount received was \$403,650.62. Because some of the money was expected for reimbursement for FY20 expenses, only a portion of the funds, \$279,499.65, will be considered revenue for FY21.

### **Reimagining Public Safety Task Force Applications Open Until February 5**

Last week there was an informational meeting on the schedule and what to expect for potential members of the Reimagining Public Safety Task Force. The [video of the informational session](#) is now available to review. The deadline for applications has been extended for a week to Friday, February 5. While it will require a significant commitment from Task Force members, the work of the Task Force is to end by June 5. We are very excited to have an excellent facilitation team to ensure that the meetings are productive. This is a great opportunity to imagine public safety in all of its aspects for Takoma Park. Here is the link to the project page: [Reimagining Public Safety Task Force](#).

### **Laurel Avenue Closure on Valentine's Day**

Sunday, February 14th is a very busy day for Park Florist. This year will also be a day when the Farmer's Market will be taking up their rear parking area. For this reason, we will be closing the one through lane of Laurel Avenue on that day to allow Park Florist to use it for its deliveries. They will have 8 vehicles with four loadings each during the day, each with about 12 flower arrangements for delivery, so it is a big production. Park Florist will have a staffed tent on the median for the loading work and the staff can help direct pedestrians and vehicles that do enter the lane. Parking on the street will not be permitted during the loading period. We are working with the Old Takoma Business Association and Police staff to ensure the area is safe and to address the possible concerns of other businesses.

### **Stormwater Fee Letters Sent to Single-family Property Owners**

A letter was sent to owners of single-family residential properties in the City to inform them of discussions to be held this month by the City Council on changing the stormwater fee from a flat rate to a tiered rate based on impervious surface area. The total amount of revenue from the combined residential and commercial stormwater fee remains the same – about \$700,000 – but is more equitably charged among the properties. Information is included in the February Newsletter and is online at: <https://takomaparkmd.gov/government/public-works/stormwater-management-program/> A presentation will be given to Council on February 10 and a public hearing held on February 24. After that, more site-specific information may be sent to individual property owners based on the Council discussion. Please watch the presentation on February 10 and contact Daryl Braithwaite at [DarylB@takomaparkmd.gov](mailto:DarylB@takomaparkmd.gov) with any questions.